

Archeological Evaluation
of Proposed Access Trail Relocation
Booker T. Washington National Monument
Franklin County, Virginia



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Management Summary

Archeological testing at the location of the proposed realignment of the interpretive access trail within the historic area of Booker T. Washington National Monument did not identify significant archeological resources that will be effected by proposed construction. Archeological testing in the vicinity of the Burroughs House and the reconstructed kitchen cabin identified resources that predate the founding of the National Monument in 1957. Although these resources may relate to site developments in the twentieth century, they were not extensively examined because construction will not impact these in any significant way. As a result of these findings the proposed construction will have "no effect" on archeological resources.

Introduction

Booker T. Washington National Monument is located in Franklin County, Virginia and commemorates the site of Washington's boyhood home, into which he was born in slavery. The site is composed of much of the Burroughs' plantation land holdings as well as the archeological sites of the Burroughs house, the detached kitchen, and Washington's birth site. The birth site or "historic area" has above-ground features including the detached kitchen (reconstructed in 1960) and a conjectural smokehouse. All of these locations are archeological resources which are actively interpreted to the visiting public. To improve accessibility to these resources to meet ADA standards, the park proposes to modify the route of the existing interpretive trail to meet slope requirements, and to extend the southern portion of the trail to doorway of the reconstructed detached kitchen structure (Figure 1). In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended) and the Programmatic Agreement between the NCSHPO's, the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation, and the National Park Service (NPS), an archeological evaluation study was conducted to identify the potential impacts of this proposal. This report contains the results from that study and recommends additional actions necessary to preserve archeological resources in place. All phases of this project meet Secretary's Standards for Historic Preservation Studies, and all associated personnel met Professional Qualifications Standards.

Historical Background

The information contained in this section has been summarized from the 1969 Administrative History written by Barry Mackintosh.

Booker T. Washington National Monument is composed of most of the lands purchased in 1850 by James Burroughs, who owned Booker T. Washington from birth. At that time, the area's

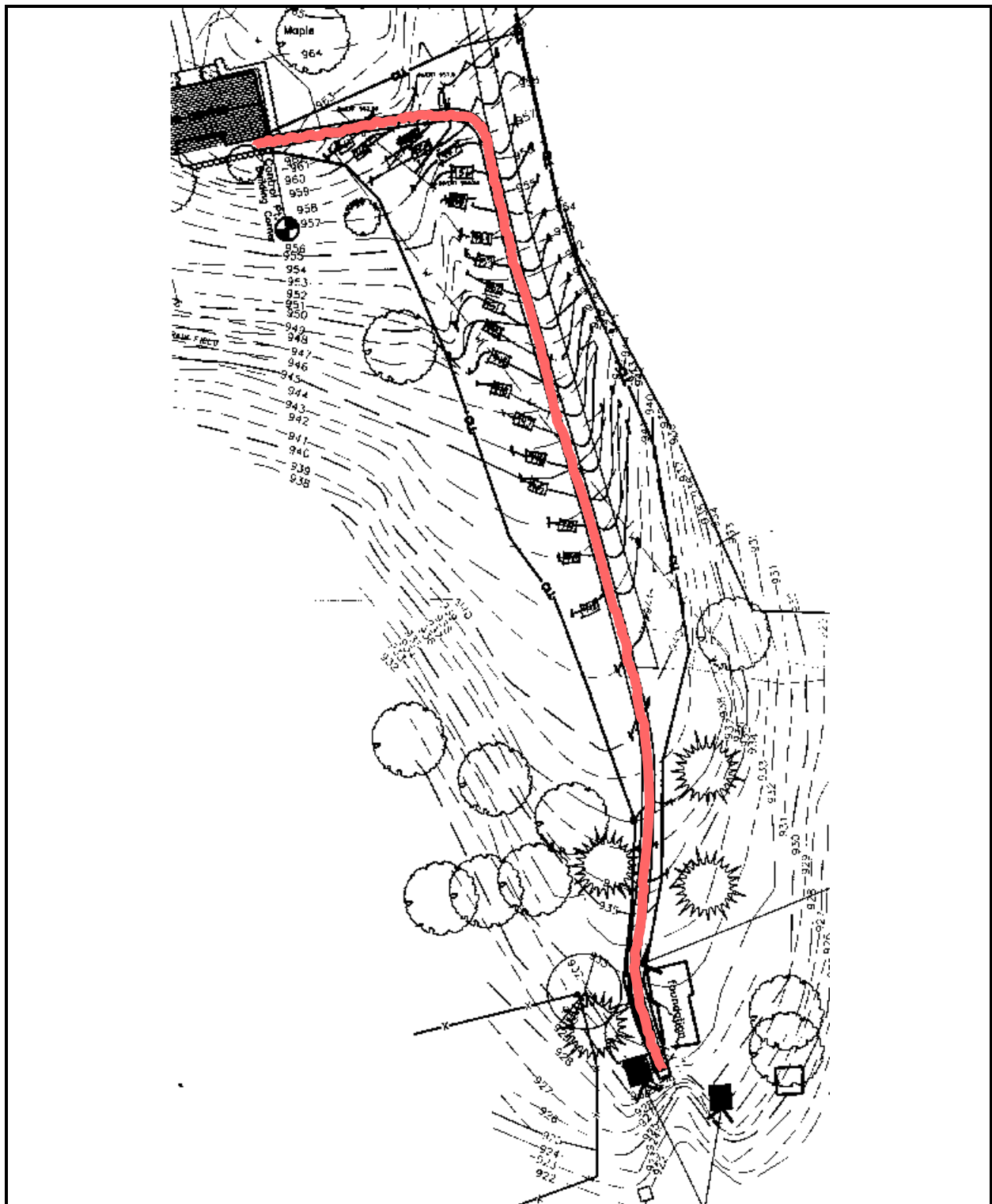


Figure 1: Proposed Access Trail.

economy and social organization was built upon subsistence farming and cultivation of tobacco by small family farms, composed of often large families whose labor was augmented by slaves. The Burroughs' farm or plantation was typical of many others in the area, composed of 220 acres of mixed-use land, some fourteen children, and seven slaves. The farm complex, now identified as the historic area, consisted of the Burroughs House, the detached kitchen, and the birthplace cabin. Tobacco barns were located in at least two separate areas some distance from the house site. The proximity of the domestic structures as well as the small-scale economic focus of the farm suggests that interaction between the family and their slaves was constant and close, within the social boundaries dictated by slavery. The proximity of other farms and the duties of slaves in the area also allowed for a limited sense of community of slaves to develop. Booker T. Washington and his family moved away from the farm at the end of the Civil War to Malden, West Virginia, returning only once, in 1908 while passing through the region on an educational tour.

After the Civil War, the farm was rented between 1870 and 1885 when it was sold to Robert Cook, then to John Robertson after Cook defaulted. Robertson took up residence at the farm in 1893 by which time only the chimney and potato hole of the birthplace cabin remained. The detached kitchen cabin was removed around 1922. In 1932, the Robertsons built a two-room frame house directly to the northwest of the Burroughs' developments, called the "Virginia Cottage".

In 1945, the farm was sold to S.J. Phillips of Tuskegee who established the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial, a non-profit organization to establish a memorial to Washington as a "National Shrine" with himself as its president. In 1946 the memorial received money to erect buildings for educational and vocational training. Developments at this time included the two lane driveway leading from State Route 122 to the Burroughs House (the proposed route for much of the relocated access trail), construction of a replica of the birthplace cabin on the site of the detached kitchen, addition of a wing on the Burroughs House to the east and a full front porch, expansion of the Virginia Cottage to twelve rooms, and walkways to both the Burroughs House and the detached kitchen. Historic photographs show the latter path to have an indential route as the proposed access trail (Figure 3). The Burroughs House was destroyed by fire in 1950. Two poultry houses were constructed on the east side of the driveway, just above the circular section. The Birthplace Memorial was in financial straits by 1953, and in 1956 was added to the National Park Service through Phillips' influence in Congress..

The NPS accepted title to the tract in 1957, removing many of the Memorial-era structures, but retaining the Virginia Cottage to house the Chief- of - Maintenance. In interviews with the Robertson Brothers and a daughter of a Burroughs neighbor, the Park Historian determined that



Figure 2: Burroughs House Prior to 1950, Showing path to Replica Cabin.

the detached kitchen was not the birthplace cabin, but that it stood to the southeast of the Burroughs House. Nevertheless, the replica cabin constructed by the Memorial Association was in serious disrepair and needed replacement. Discussion followed on the merits of replacing the detached kitchen reconstruction with a reconstruction on the birthplace site. Then Regional Director E.M. Lisle commented (the)“..birthsite cannot be located precisely because of construction and bulldozing in its vicinity in past years...” (121). In 1959, Regional Archeologist John Griffin conducted excavations at the site of the replica cabin, and verified its location as the site of the original, identifying a chimney base and a paving area extending some ten feet west of

the replica. The existing cabin replica was completed in 1960.

Previous Archeological Research: Archeological investigations at Booker T. Washington National Monument have been exclusively associated with construction activities for development of the site. The earliest was the 1959 excavation at the site of the reconstructed "Boyhood Cabin" by John W. Griffin. Griffin identified the remains of a typical cabin, composed of a chimney base, a "potato hole" and a stone-paved area to the east and north (Figure 3). These features were identified immediately beneath the surface. No details of construction, especially if the archeological features were removed or filled over, were recorded for the existing cabin reconstruction.

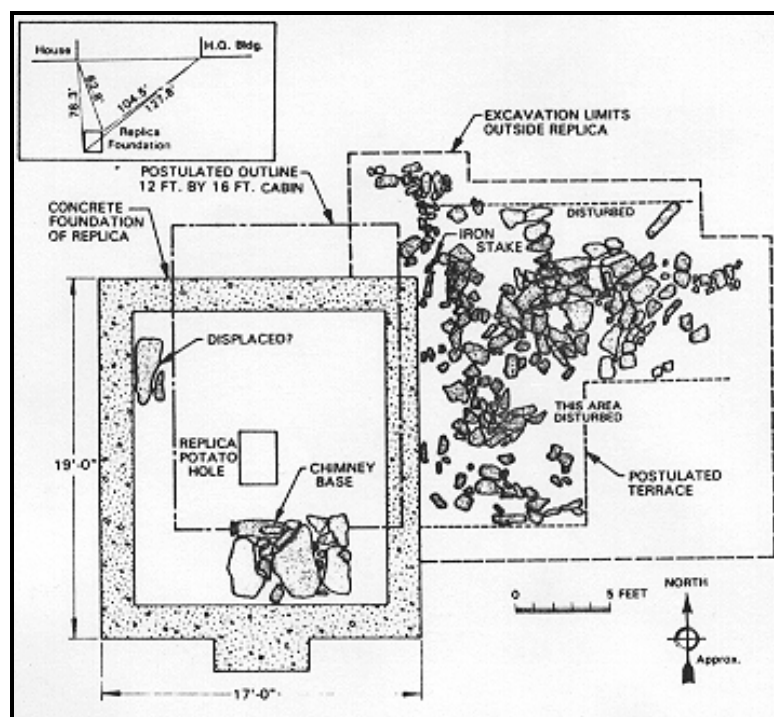


Figure 3: Plan of 1959 Griffin Excavation.

In 1982, Kathleen Fiero conducted a shovel test survey for installation of electrical lines along the 1940's entrance road (Figure 4). 36 shovel tests did not identify any archeological resources. A portion of the current project will impact the area Fiero tested, and her work will serve to assess the effects of the current proposed construction in that area along the length of the entrance road.

In 1985, Campana and Orr conducted a soil resistivity survey of the Historic Zone, identifying numerous subsurface anomalies. Limited testing of these anomalies by David G. Orr did not

associate any of the anomalies with archeological features.

In 1996, Allen H. Cooper excavated a test adjacent to the birthplace cabin site for placement of a wayside marker. Excavation of a two foot square unit identified only agricultural soils, suggesting that the area had been plowed; no artifacts dating to the historic period were found.

Archeological Significance: Booker T. Washington National Monument is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its current nomination lists the Burroughs House site and the Birthplace Cabin site as contributing resources. It erroneously lists the Kitchen or "Slave" Cabin as non-contributing. However, the Kitchen Cabin is constructed on the archeologically verified remains of a Washington-era cabin and will be considered a contributing resource for the purpose of this study. Any additional resources identified as possessing attributes meeting any of the four Register criterion will be considered a contributing as well. The kitchen cabin site identified by Griffin in 1959 and the site of the Burroughs House would both be considered contributing resources. Intact archeological resources relating to either of these structures would constitute a significant resource.

FIELD INVESTIGATIONS

Relocation of the access trail will require new ground disturbance in two areas; east of the Visitor Center, and within the historic core between the reconstructed cabin and the outline of the Burroughs House. A total of four archeological test units and three shovel tests were excavated to identify any unknown resources in the proposed route of construction.

Archeological fieldwork was conducted by the author between May 12 and May 14, 1997. All fieldwork and laboratory analysis was conducted in conformance with "Archeology and Historic Preservation: Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines". All soils were passed through one-quarter inch hardware cloth with recovered artifacts placed in plastic bags by

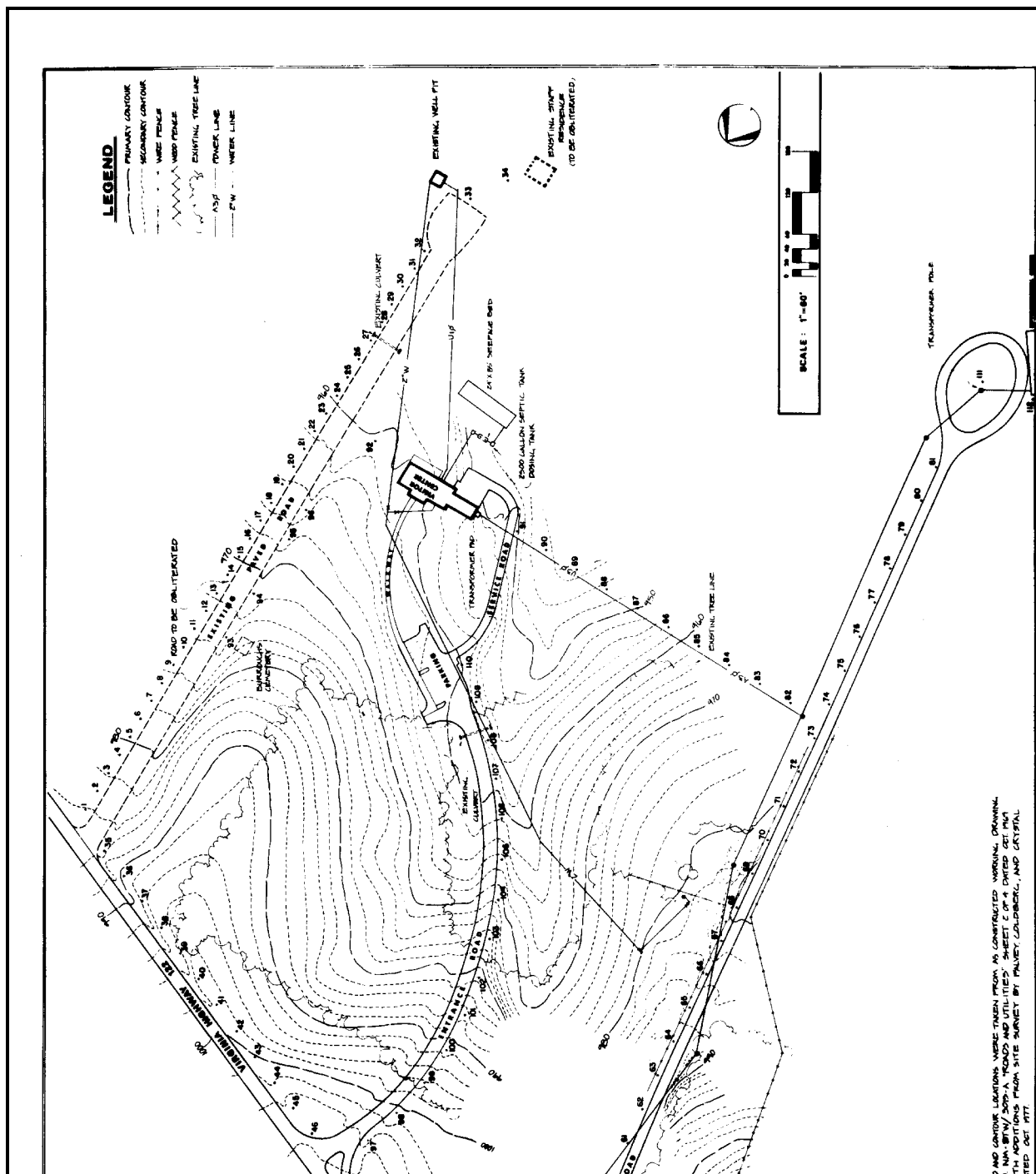


Figure 4: 1982 Fiero Shovel Tests.

provenience. All excavation units and features were documented by photographs and measured

drawings both in plan and in profile. Soil colors were recorded using the Munsell soil color system. All units were excavated to sterile soil with additional excavation conducted after final documentation to ensure that all soils containing archeological resources had been identified.

Tests East of the Visitor Center: In this area, construction of the proposed path requires grading from the existing path down to the existing roadbed that was constructed around 1946. One test unit and two shovel tests were excavated in this area (Figure 5).

Unit 1 was located between 69 and 71 feet east of southeast corner of Visitor's Center and measured 2 by 2 feet square. The unit displayed two strata (Figure 6). Stratum 1 was composed of dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10YR 3/6) clayey loam and continued only for 0.15 feet below surface where it was replaced by Stratum 2. Stratum 2 consisted of dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/4) clay with occasional charcoal flecks and angular quartzite rocks. Stratum 2 continued to 1.0 feet below surface, with some rotting rock appearing by that depth. A sondage excavated in the center indicated that Stratum 2 continued to at least 1.8 feet below surface, below the proposed depth of grading. No artifacts were recovered from Unit 1.

Shovel Test 1 was located 50 feet east of the southeast corner of the Visitor's Center. It had three strata:

Stratum 1: brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/3) clayey loam from 0 - 0.15 feet below surface.

Stratum 2: dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/4) clay (with some organic material) from 0.15 to 0.9 feet below surface. It contained a single modern artifact.

Stratum 3: 5 YR clay from 0.9 to 1.0 feet below surface.

Shovel Test 1 exhibited stratigraphy typical of plowed fields; it contained no artifacts or archeological resources.

Shovel Test 2 was located 70 feet east of the Visitor Center and 20 feet south of Unit 1). It had three strata:

Stratum 1: brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/3) clayey loam from 0 - 0.15 feet below surface.

Stratum 2: dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/4) clay (with some organic material) from 0.15 to 0.6 feet below surface.

Stratum 3: 5 YR clay from 0.6 to 1.8 feet below surface.

Shovel Test 1 exhibited stratigraphy typical of plowed fields; it contained no artifacts or features.

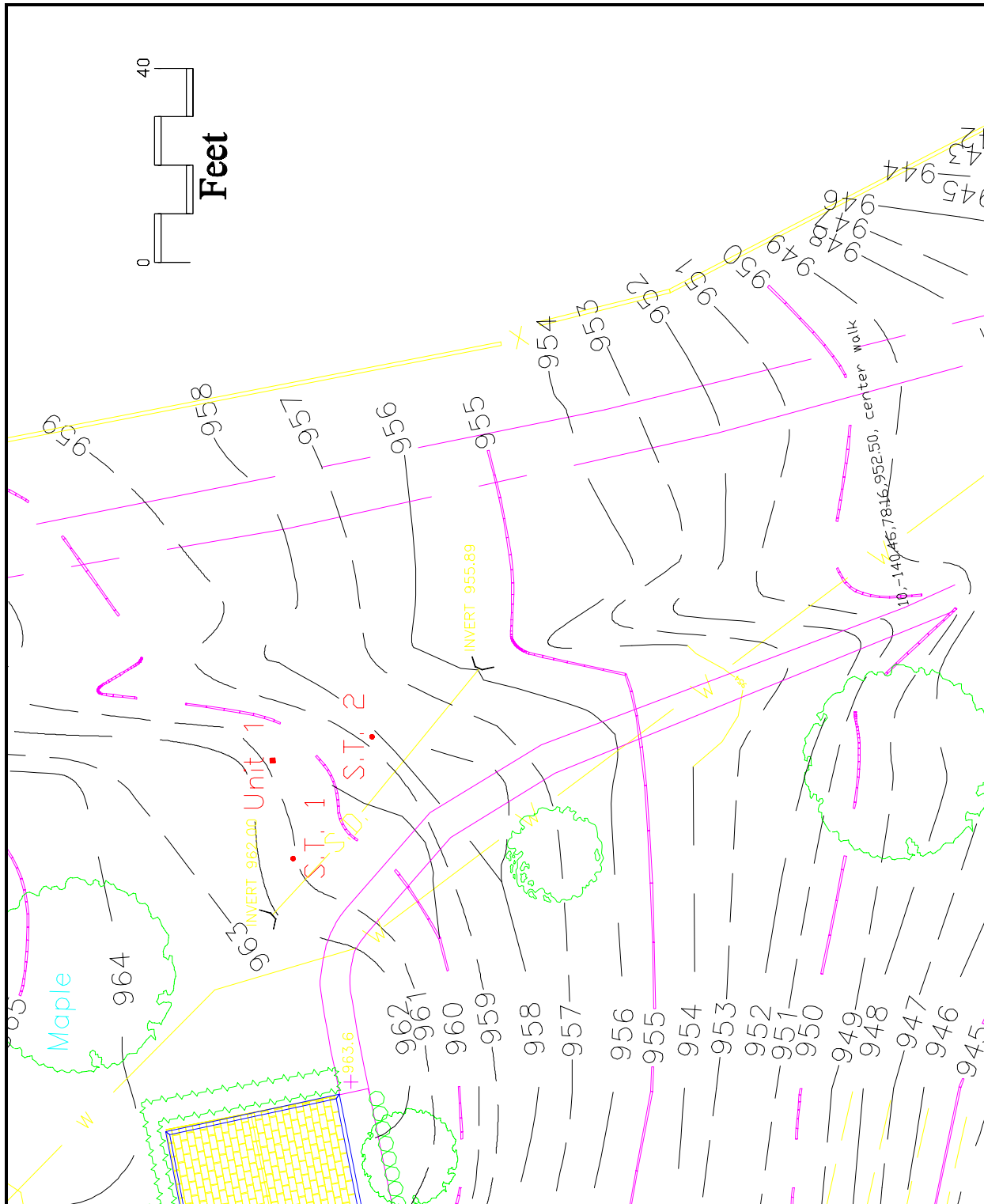


Figure 5: Location of Archeological Tests East of the Visitor Center.



Figure 6: Photograph of Unit 1, Stratum 2 and North Profile.

Summary of Testing East of the Visitor Center: One archeological test unit and two shovel tests within the proposed area of construction east of the Visitor Center did not reveal archeological resources. Soil stratigraphy was consistent with agricultural activity. Reference to the excavation of 36 shovel tests by Fiero in 1982 along the same route as the proposed new construction indicate that no archeological resources exist along this portion of the route.

Tests in the Historic Core: Four archeological test units were excavated along the proposed route of the access trail west of the marked outline of the Burroughs House. These units measured two by two feet square and were excavated by natural stratigraphy (Figure 7).

Unit 2 was located between 8 and 10 feet south of the northwest corner of the marked outline of the Burroughs House and between 5 and 7 feet west. Removal of the sod revealed Stratum 1, composed of fine grayish brown (Munsell color 10YR 5/2) sand with small ($0.2<$) angular gravel. This stratum represents an obvious modern fill deposit across the entire unit. At 0.1 feet below surface, the small gravel was replaced by very small ($0.05'<$) gravel, composing 50% of the fill's volume. At 0.2 feet below surface, Stratum 2 appeared accross the entire unit, defined as mottled brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/3) and dark grayish brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/2) clayey loam with small patches of clay embedded in it.

Stratum 2 was only 0.05 feet thick and its removal revealed a joined pair of features forming a "Y" in the center of the unit at 0.6 feet below surface (Figure 8). Filled with dense red clay, they

measured 0.35 feet to 0.4 feet wide (the same width as a brick or 2 by 4 foot board. These features lay in Stratum 3, an apparant living surface, composed of mottled 10YR 4/4 and 10YR 5/4 clayey loam with occasional charcoal flecking. A single modern screw fragment was the only artifact recovered from this stratum and the unit.

Unit 3 was located between 7 and 9 feet west of the junction of the north and south units of the Burroughs House. Removal of the sod revealed Stratum 1, composed of grayish brown (Munsell color 10YR 5/2) sand with small gravel across the entire unit (Identical to that found in Unit 2). Stratum 2 began at 0.2 feet below surface across the entire unit and was composed of mottled dark grayish brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/2) and brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/3) clayey loam with gravel. It contained both wire and cut nails, some embedded into the surface of Stratum 3. It also contained fragments of plastic wire insulation and clear vessel glass, all indicative of a twentieth-century date for the stratum.

Stratum 3 began at approximately 0.6 feet below surface, much lower than found in Unit 2 (by 0.4 feet) Defined as mottled dark grayish brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/2) and brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/3) sandy clay (Identical to that found in Unit 2), the top of Stratum 3 sloped slightly from west to east, but only by 0.1 feet. Excavation was suspended at this depth.

Unit 4 was located between 6 and 8 feet west of the south kitchen portion of the Burroughs House, aligned with Units 2 and 3). Removal of the sod revealed Stratum 1, composed of grayish brown (Munsell color 10YR 5/2) sand with small gravel across entire unit. Stratum 1 extended to a depth of approximately 0.2 feet before being replaced by mottled dark grayish brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/2) and brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/3) clayey loam with gravel, identical to that found in Units 2 and 3. Stratum 2 contained a single wire nail. At a minimum depth of 0.4 feet below surface, Stratum 3 appeared composed of mottled dark grayish brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/2) and brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/3) sandy clay where excavation was suspended.

In Unit 3, Stratum 3 appeared at less depth than in Unit 2, and comparable to that in Unit 2. This indicates that the underlying surface that had been filled was not level. Recovery of numerous wire nail fragments indicates a most recent date of deposit for this fill event..

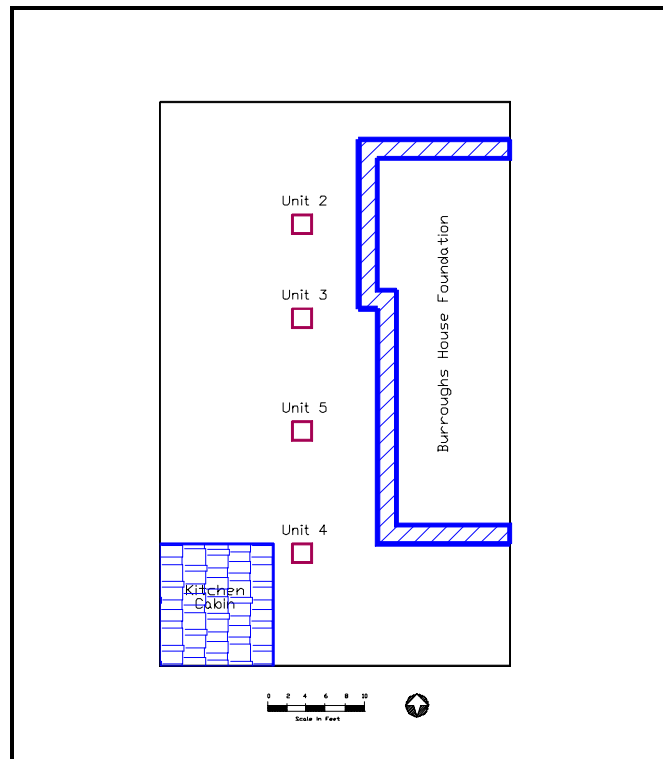


Figure 7: Location of Units in Historic Core.

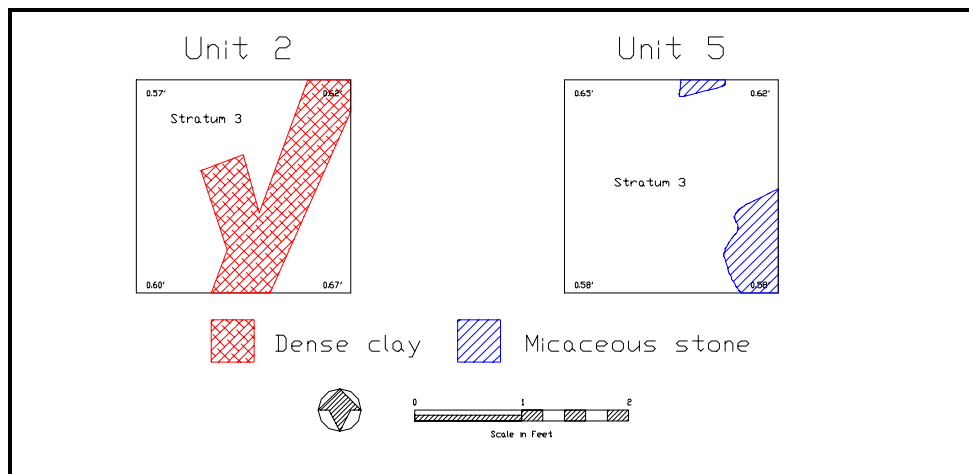


Figure 8: Plan Views of Units 2 and 5.

Unit 5: Unit 5 was located between Unit 2 and 3. Removal of the sod revealed Stratum 1,

composed of grayish brown (Munsell color 10YR 5/2) sand with small gravel across the entire unit. Stratum 1 extended to a depth of approximately 0.25 feet before being replaced by mottled dark grayish brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/2) and brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/3) clayey loam with gravel (Stratum 2), identical to that found in Units 2, 3 and 4. Stratum 2 contained wire nails and clear glass and measured approximately 0.15 feet thick before being replaced by Stratum 3, composed of mottled dark grayish brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/2) and brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/3) sandy clay. Removal of Stratum 2 revealed two micaceous stones embedded in Stratum 3 (Figure 8, Figure 9). These stones do not appear related to the paving feature which Griffin identified in 1959.



Figure 9: Photograph of Unit 5 Stratum 3 Showing Micaceous Stones.

Shovel Test 3: Shovel Test 3 was located 55 feet south of the intersection of the barn trail and the existing access trail 1 and 12 feet east of the existing trail. It had three strata: Stratum 1 composed of 10YR 4/3 clayey loam from 0 - 0.15 feet below surface, Stratum 2 composed of dark yellowish brown (Munsell color 10YR 4/4) clay containing road gravel, and asphalt fragments from 0.15 to 0.3 feet below surface, and Stratum 3 composed of 5 YR clay from 0.3 to 0.4 feet below surface. This test indicated that the 1940's road to the site had stripped all potential archeological soils from the subsurface.

Summary of Testing in the Historic Zone: Four test units were excavated in the proposed route

of the access path between its current terminus and the reconstructed Kitchen Cabin. All four tests revealed an identical stratigraphic sequence. All units indicated that a possible historic surface (Stratum 3) exists beneath a layer of modern fill materials (Stratum 1 and 2). These fill layer contains numerous wire nails and plastic objects, suggesting that these strata are associated with the commemorative activities at the site in the 1940's and 1950's. This stratum appears to the depth of between 0.5 and 0.6 feet below surface. It is unlikely that this material represents an earlier historic pathway on the west side of the Burroughs House due to the (relatively) large numbers of wire nails found within the fill. Stratum 3, however, appears with significant undulations, appearing at at the depth below surface of 0.25 feet, 0.6 feet, 0.4 feet sloping to 0.25 feet, and 0.4 feet respectively for units north to south. This layer may possibly predate the memorialization period. It will not, however, be impacted by the proposed access trail construction.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Archeological testing was conducted along the proposed route of a new access trail from the Visitor Center to the reconstructed Kitchen cabin site. One archeological test unit and two shovel tests in areas adjacent to the Visitor Center that had not been obviously disturbed by the 1940's entrance road revealed only agricultural soils containing evidence of plowing; no features or artifacts that would contribute to the site's National Register eligibility were identified. Testing in the Historic Zone (west of the marked foundation of the Burrough's House and north of the reconstructed Kitchen Cabin identified a layer of historic fill deposits associated with 1940's and later development of the site that overlay a potentially historic ground surface (Stratum 3). Stratum 3 contained a clay feature that may have been associated with a pathway to the Burroughs House (as a board or brick path border) . No evidence for the historic paving adjacent to the Kitchen Cabin identified by Griffin in 1959 was found. Until Stratum 3 has been examined in greater detail by the park's Overview and Assessment program, it must be considered as a contributing resource. The proposed construction project will not impact this stratum and as such will have "no effect" on archeological resources.

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ARTIFACTS RECOVERED FROM ARCHEOLOGICAL TESTS

CAT_NMBR	OBJ_NAME	CNT.	DESCR1	DESCR2	CP_WITHIN	OBJ_DATE	MEASURE	MATERIAL
BOWA 1	DISK	1	Disk.	complete.	SHOVEL TEST 1 STRATUM 2		WT 0.3G	ALLOY
BOWA 2	SCREW FRAGMENT	1	Screw fragment.	proximal.	UNIT 2 STRATUM 2		WT 3.9G	IRON
BOWA 3	NAIL	2	Nail, wire. Spike.	complete.	UNIT 3 STRATUM 2	AD 1880 TO AD 1990	WT 45.7G	IRON
BOWA 4	NAIL	17	Nail, wire.	complete.	UNIT 3 STRATUM 2	AD 1880 TO AD 1990	WT 59.8G	IRON
BOWA 5	NAIL	6	Nail, cut.	complete.	UNIT 3 STRATUM 2	AD 1790 TO AD 1990	WT 26.5G	IRON
BOWA 6	NAIL FRAGMENT	2	Nail, cut.	distal.	UNIT 3 STRATUM 2	AD 1790 TO AD 1990	WT 1.9G	IRON
BOWA 7	NAIL FRAGMENT	1	Nail, wire.	proximal.	UNIT 3 STRATUM 2	AD 1880 TO AD 1990	WT 1.2G	IRON
BOWA 8	WIRE FRAGMENT	1	Wire fragment.	complete.	UNIT 3 STRATUM 2		WT 1.9G	IRON
BOWA 9	WIRE FRAGMENT	1	Wire insulation.	miscellaneous.	UNIT 3 STRATUM 2		WT 0.1G	PLASTIC
BOWA 10	SHERD	1	Glass. Clear. Indefinite.	body.	UNIT 3 STRATUM 2		WT 1.2G	GLASS
BOWA 11	NAIL	1	Nail, wire.	complete.	UNIT 4 STRATUM 2	AD 1880 TO AD 1990	WT 2.8G	IRON
BOWA 12	NAIL	2	Nail, wire.	complete.	UNIT 5 STRATUM 2	AD 1880 TO AD 1990	WT 2.7G	IRON
BOWA 13	NAIL	1	Nail, wire. Roofing.	complete.	UNIT 5 STRATUM 2	AD 1880 TO AD 1990	WT 2.7G	IRON
BOWA 14	SHERD	3	Glass. Clear. Indefinite.	body.	UNIT 5 STRATUM 2		WT 3.1G	GLASS
BOWA 15	SHERD	1	Glass. Clear. UID Container	body.	UNIT 5 STRATUM 2		WT 0.7G	GLASS